Most direct

622 [191 177] commands, in so far as I was able to observe, were made in Spanish![4] — essentially in acculturation contexts. In general, they concerned village care, small services, and the like. No occasion was observed of commanding older men, except for a married youth of 19, who was the youngest adult male in the village. The two or three commands he received during my stay went unnoticed, and, in one or two instances, were even directly contravened. The capitans of the Cinaruco river group and of Palmarito de Guachara both consistently complained that no one paid enough attention to them, and the Palmarito chief complained that he never was kept [571] sufficiently informed of events by his people. The fact is that people do pretty much as they choose in all important decision-making situations which do not involve the community at large, or the relationship of some member of the community or the entire group to outsiders.[5] In the former situation, the chief serves as a consultative funnel through which the community discussion pours back and forth until the community achieves some clear but unstated consensus upon which 622 648 community members can act, individually of course. Only in the situations dealing [354] with outside groups does the Yaruro capitanship emerge as a more developed status which might metaphorically be described as a position similar to that of a minister of foreign relations. In behalf of his group, he talks with any representatives of outside groups, especially if they are non-Yaruro, and acts as gatherer of information and as channel of communication between the community and the outside entity. Even this is weakened, however, since it applies more by courtesy than by fact among the Yaruro themselves, and other members of the community may perform the same function even if to a somewhat smaller degree. It is also weakened in that no Yaruro is prevented from acting on his own with respect to non-Yaruro outsiders, and, in fact, many Yaruro do establish their own relationships with outsiders as a number of instances attested. Indeed, the rights of the individual members of the society to make their own decisions, at least internally if not also [682] externally, is insisted on. In one instance, a chief who took it upon himself to

[4] Commands and other stress situations, which generally appear to be uncongenial to the Yaruro and more overt as the people have been more subject to acculturation, seem [578] to elicit from the Yaruro Spanish responses rather than Yaruro ones. It is as though it [152] were not fitting to utter commands or express anger in Yaruro. Thus, the few times noisy altercation was heard among the Cinaruco Yaruro, the language used was Spanish. The chief's commands and his overt anger were always expressed in Spanish, even if he [191] had just before been speaking in Yaruro. Though anger may often be felt, it is not shown if the participants are expressing themselves in Yaruro. Thus, the chief scolded one of the village boys for riding one of the recently acquired burros — in Spanish; he ordered a 19-year old young man to do some task — in Spanish; he complained of the actions of one of the village elders in taking on the job of guide without first consulting him (though he would certainly have permitted it) — in Spanish.

[5] Cf. Leeds, 1960 a, with respect to the place of individual action in Yaruro society. [181 114] Though there is individual action, choice, and responsibility, these are all carried out as an aspect of community organization and essentially with community affirmation. A person is not an individual set in counterpoint to his society — there is no polarity of individual-society, as we, in our culture, generally seem to conceive. Individualism in the latter sense does not exist among the Yaruro. The Yaruro should not be mistaken for an individualistic culture, as, I suspect, several of the cultures described as individualistic in Mead, 1937, should not have been.